

# VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

## SR-241/SR-91 Express Lanes Connector Project

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August 19, 2015 (revisal of June 1, 2015)

### California Department of Transportation

District 12, Orange and Riverside County

12-ORA-241 PM 36.1/39.1

12-ORA-91 PM 14.7/18.9

08-RIV-91 PM 0.0/1.5

EA 0K9700

Project ID #1200020097



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Date:

9-1-2015

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10/12/15

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District 12

*Statement of Compliance:* Produced in compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements, as appropriate, to meet the level of analysis and documentation that has been determined necessary for this project. This report is formatted for double-sided printing.





# VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

## SR-241/SR-91 Express Lanes Connector Project

### PURPOSE OF STUDY AND ASSESSMENT METHOD

The purpose of this Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) is to document potential visual impacts caused by the proposed State Route 241 (SR-241)/State Route 91 (SR-91) Express Lanes Connector Project (the Proposed Project) and propose measures to lessen any detrimental impacts that are identified. Visual impacts are demonstrated by identifying visual resources in the Project Area, measuring the amount of change that would occur as a result of the Proposed Project, and predicting how the affected public would respond to or perceive those changes. This visual impact assessment follows the guidance outlined in the publication *Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects* published by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) (January 1988).

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project proposes to construct a median-to-median bridge connector between SR-241 and SR-91; refer to Exhibits 1 through 3g. The Proposed Project would result in the widening of the southbound median of SR-241, beginning at the Windy Ridge Wildlife Crossing and spanning for approximately 5,300 ft northward towards the SR-241/SR-91 interchange; an additional center lane and shoulder would be constructed along this alignment. At this point, two lanes, one in both the northbound and the southbound direction, would be added by widening the roadway within the existing median area. The two new lanes for the connector would be constructed as bridge structures (of similar height and massing as the existing bridge connector structures) and would be located between the existing SR-241 general purpose connectors and would merge with the existing SR-91 Express Lanes; refer to Exhibit 4.

To accommodate the addition of the median-to-median connector, the existing eastbound SR-91 Express Lanes would be shifted to the south and an eastbound auxiliary express lane would be constructed along SR-91. The Gypsum Canyon on- and off-ramps and the northbound SR-241 to eastbound SR-91 general purpose connector would be realigned to accommodate the SR-91 modifications. The number of existing eastbound SR-91 general purpose lanes would be maintained within the Project limits. Other modifications would involve the construction of four retaining walls, grading improvements to the slope south of eastbound SR-91 (approximately 3,600 ft west of Coal Canyon Undercrossing), buffers between the new eastbound SR-91 and westbound Express Lanes and general purpose lanes, and restriping of westbound SR-91 lanes from west of Coal Canyon Undercrossing to the east of the Gypsum Canyon Road Undercrossing. It should be noted that no new soundwalls are expected to be constructed as a result of the Proposed Project.

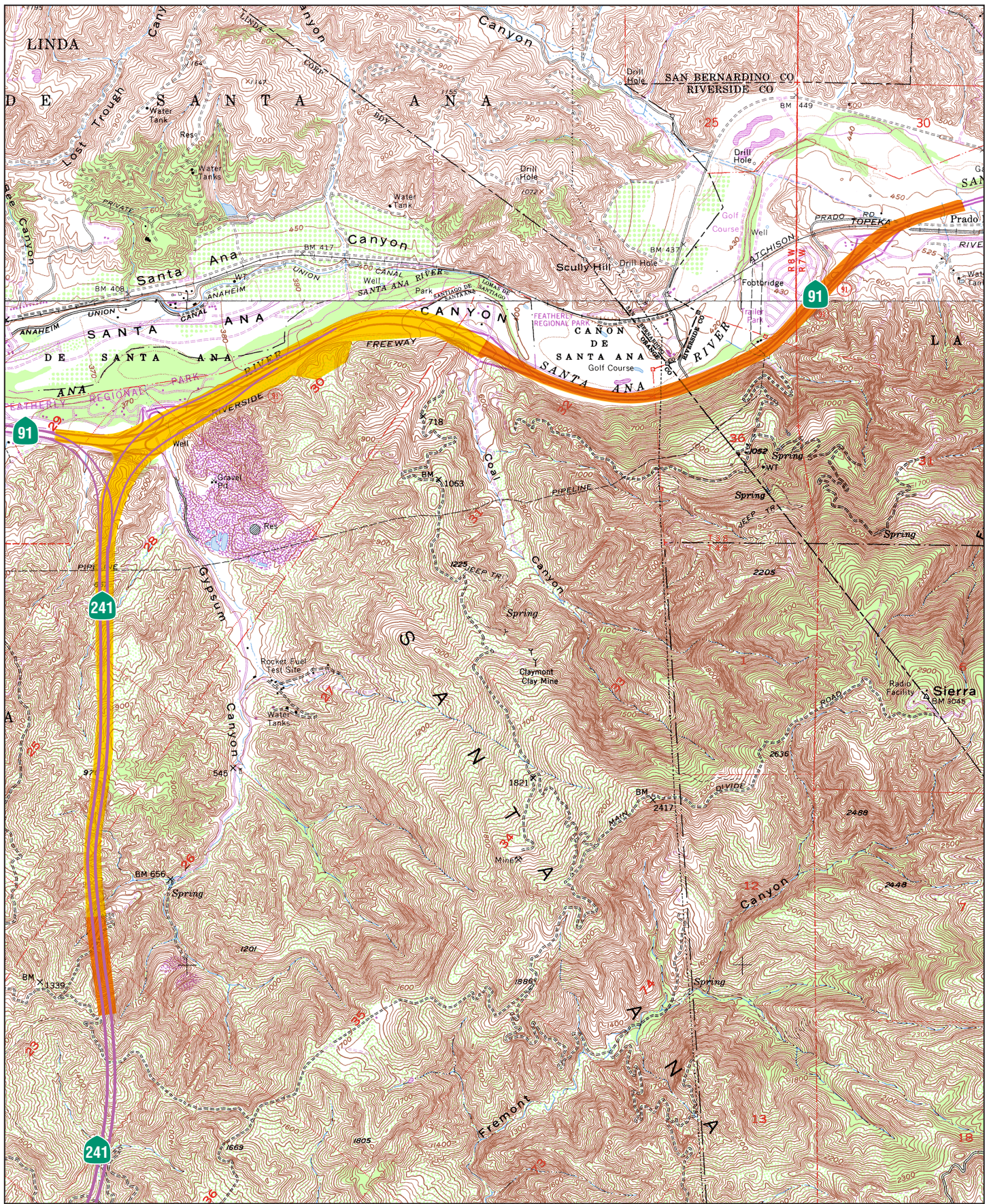
One of the four proposed retaining walls would be located between the southbound and northbound lanes of SR-241 (within the southern portion of the project site), approximately 2,250 feet in length and with a maximum height of 15 feet. This retaining wall would face the northbound travel lanes of SR-241. Two of the four retaining walls are Mechanically Stabilized Earth (MSE walls). These two MSE walls would be located on eastbound SR-91 (near SR-241) and would be approximately 1,350 feet in length (up to 15 ft in height). These walls would not be readily visible by the public due to the existing intervening structures associated with the existing SR-91/SR-241 interchange. The last retaining wall would be located at the eastern portion of the Project Site, along the existing eastbound SR-91 and is approximately 1,025

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Source: USGS Black Star Canyon, CA Quadrangle, 1988.

Project Site  New Advanced Signage Area



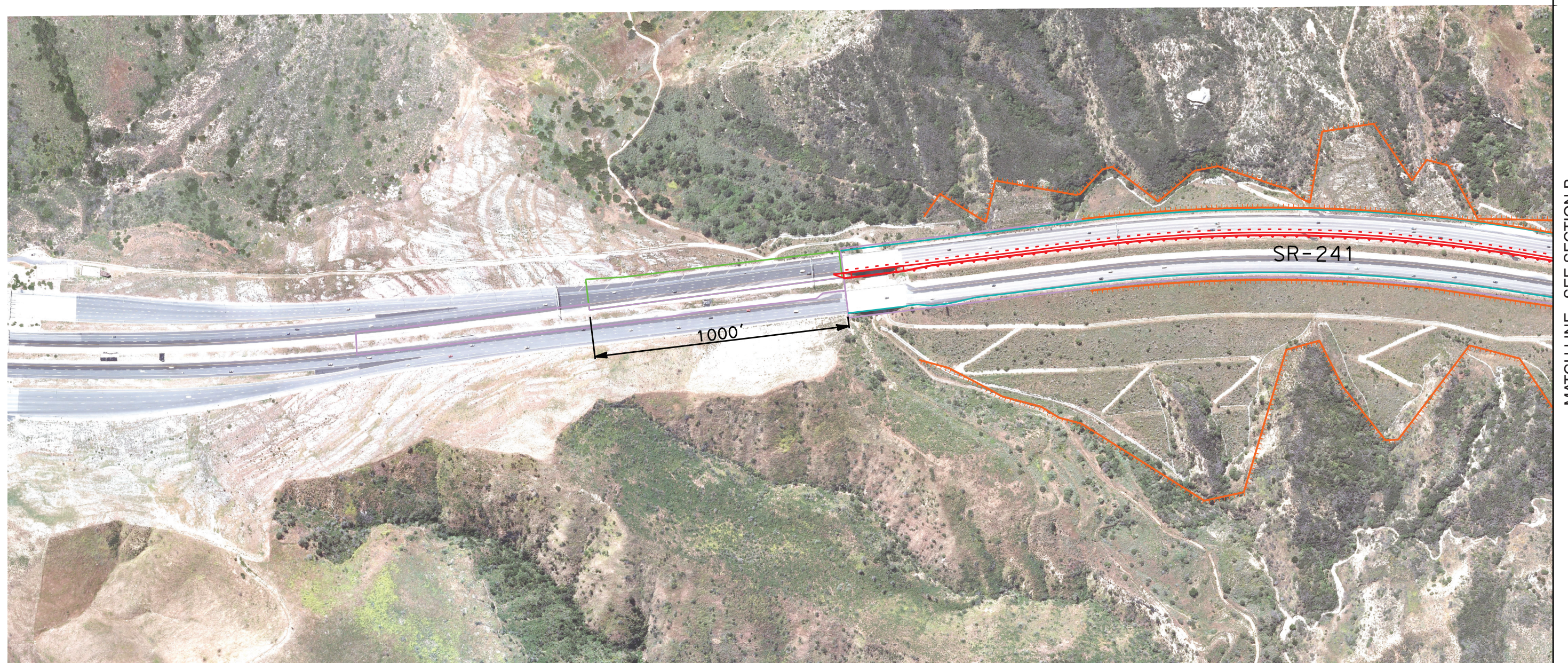
SR-241/SR-91 EXPRESS LANES CONNECTOR PROJECT • VIA

**Site Vicinity**



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MATCH LINE - SEE SECTION B

# PROJECT LEGEND

- |   |   |  |                                |
|---|---|--|--------------------------------|
| <span style="color: red;">—</span>        | SR-241/SR-91 EXPRESS LANES CONNECTOR PROJECT      | <span style="color: purple;">—◆—</span>            | PROPOSED RETAINING WALL        |
| <span style="color: orange;">- - -</span> | EXISTING ACCESS CONTROL (INCLUDES SLOPE EASEMENT) | <span style="color: blue;">—</span>                | PROPOSED STORM DRAIN PIPE      |
| <span style="color: purple;">—</span>     | PROPOSED PROJECT LIMIT                            | <span style="color: blue;">- - -</span>            | PROPOSED STORM DRAIN SWALE     |
| <span style="color: blue;">—</span>       | INITIAL RCTC SR-91 CIP PROJECT                    | <span style="color: blue;">○ □</span>              | PROPOSED STORM DRAIN STRUCTURE |
| <span style="color: teal;">—</span>       | MAXIMUM DISTURBANCE LIMIT                         | <span style="color: pink;">&lt;&lt;&lt;&lt;</span> | PROPOSED ACCESS                |
|   |   | <span style="color: green;">—</span>               | PROPOSED STAGING AREA          |
|   |   | <span style="color: green;">—</span>               | TEMPORARY DISTURBANCE          |

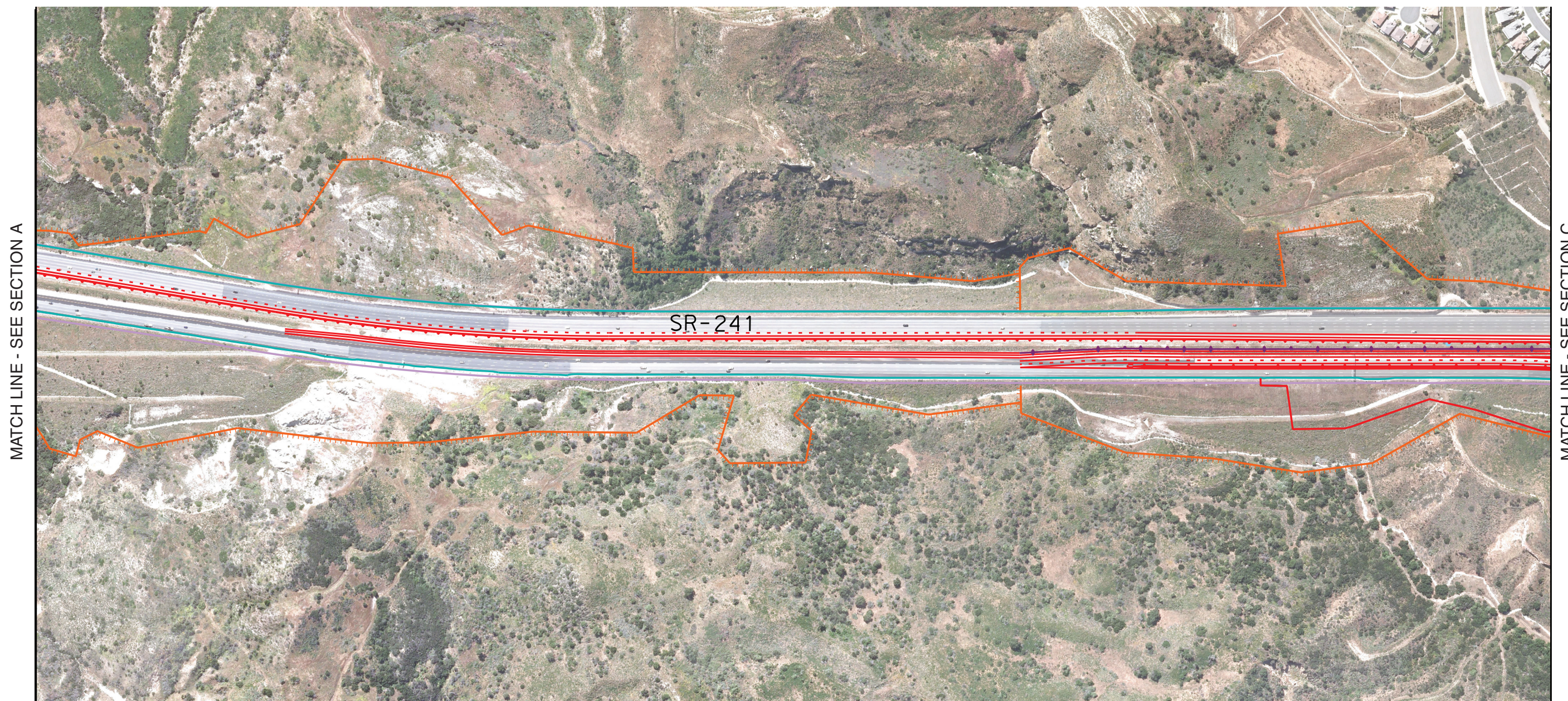
## SECTION A





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MATCH LINE - SEE SECTION A

MATCH LINE - SEE SECTION C

SR-241

**PROJECT LEGEND**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <span style="color: red;">—</span> SR-241/SR-91 EXPRESS LANES CONNECTOR PROJECT             | <span style="color: purple;">—◆—</span> PROPOSED RETAINING WALL               |
| <span style="color: orange;">- - -</span> EXISTING ACCESS CONTROL (INCLUDES SLOPE EASEMENT) | <span style="color: lightblue;">—</span> PROPOSED STORM DRAIN PIPE            |
| <span style="color: purple;">—</span> PROPOSED PROJECT LIMIT                                | <span style="color: lightblue;">- - -</span> PROPOSED STORM DRAIN SWALE       |
| <span style="color: blue;">—</span> INITIAL RCTC SR-91 CIP PROJECT                          | <span style="color: lightblue;">○ □</span> PROPOSED STORM DRAIN STRUCTURE     |
| <span style="color: teal;">—</span> MAXIMUM DISTURBANCE LIMIT                               | <span style="color: magenta;">&lt; &lt; &lt; &lt; &lt;</span> PROPOSED ACCESS |
|   | <span style="color: green;">—</span> PROPOSED STAGING AREA                    |
|   | <span style="color: green;">—</span> TEMPORARY DISTURBANCE                    |

**SECTION B**



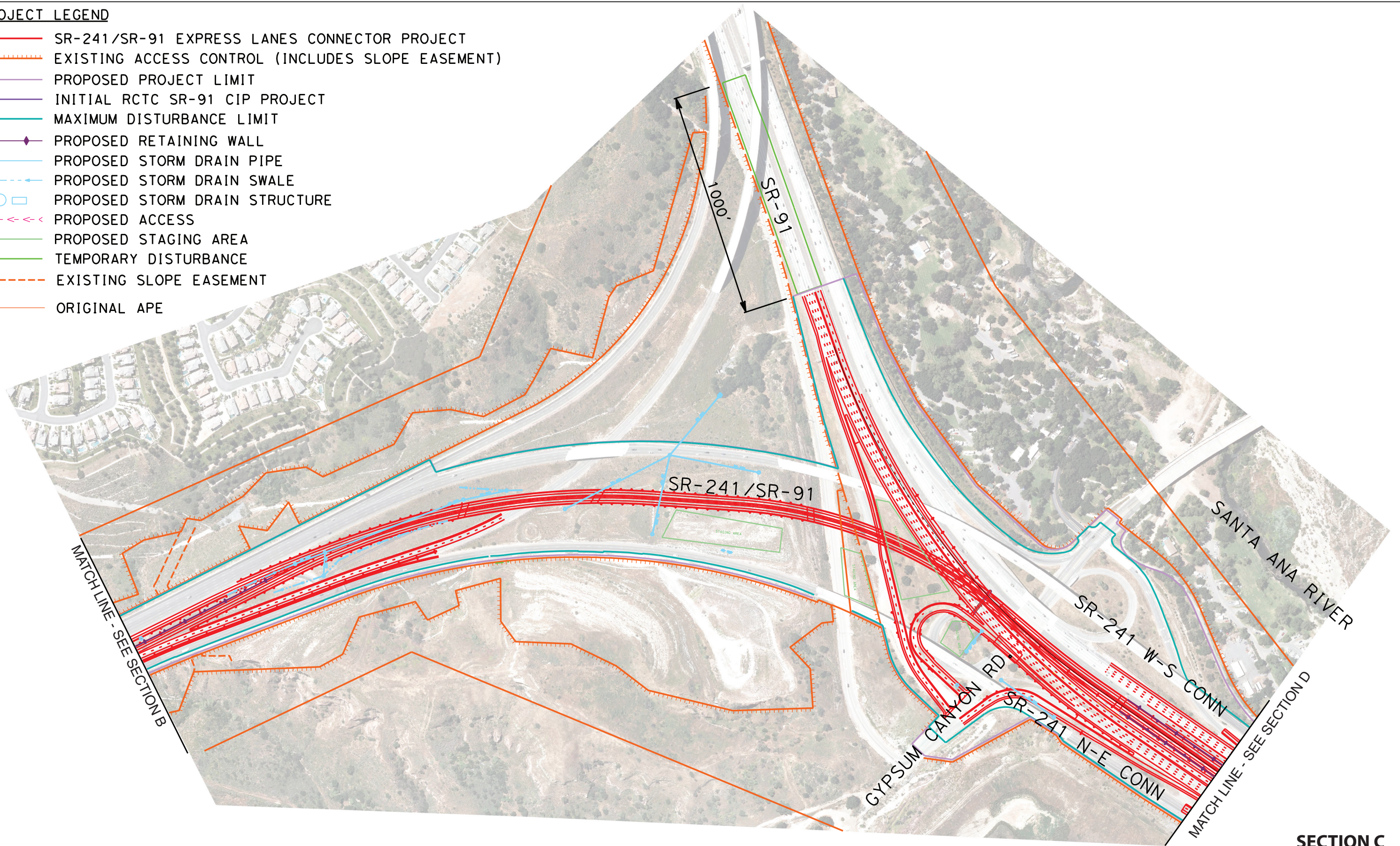


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# PROJECT LEGEND

- SR-241/SR-91 EXPRESS LANES CONNECTOR PROJECT
- - - EXISTING ACCESS CONTROL (INCLUDES SLOPE EASEMENT)
- PROPOSED PROJECT LIMIT
- INITIAL RCTC SR-91 CIP PROJECT
- MAXIMUM DISTURBANCE LIMIT
- ◆— PROPOSED RETAINING WALL
- PROPOSED STORM DRAIN PIPE
- - - PROPOSED STORM DRAIN SWALE
- □ PROPOSED STORM DRAIN STRUCTURE
- - - PROPOSED ACCESS
- PROPOSED STAGING AREA
- TEMPORARY DISTURBANCE
- - - EXISTING SLOPE EASEMENT
- ORIGINAL APE



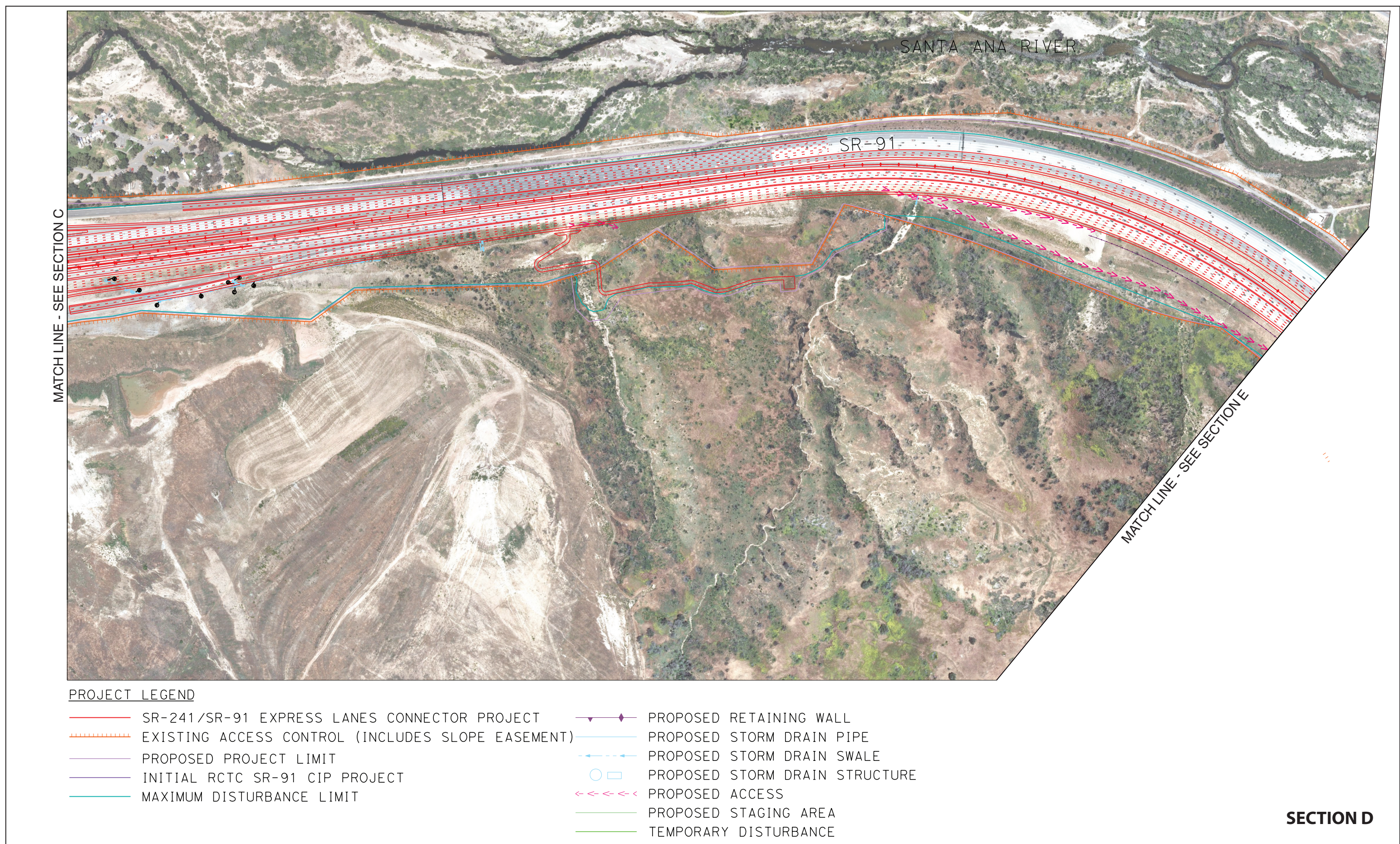
## SECTION C





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**SECTION D**



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